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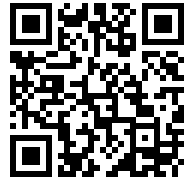

THE ANATOMIE OF THE ENGLISH NVNNERY, AT LISBON IN PORTVGALL.

HAVING by reaſon of my Calling beene oftentimes occaſioned to trauell beyond the Seas: it ſo chanced that I was once (through diuers accidents) driuen to haue ſome conference with Father *Seth*, alias *Ioſeph Foſter*, an Engliſh Frier in *Lisbon*, and the ſole Confeſſor of a Couent of Engliſh Nunnes reſiding in the ſame City; who by his ſubtill and wily fetches, inticed me to abide with him in the houſe, imploying me daily in copying out certaine Treatiſes of Obedience, which hee had compoſed for the Nunnes. And after a while hauing depriued me of meanes to depart from him, by taking away my apparell, and putting me into a diſguized fooliſh habit (of which I was heartily aſhamed) both he and the Abbeſſe, with ſome other of the Siſters (as they call thē) neuer ceaſed to vrge me by

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deepe-diſſembled intreaties and perſwaſion, till I had giuen conſent to become a holy Brother and Maſſe-prieſt in the houſe, for I had ſoone attained to more skil in the *Rubrick*, then euery ſhaueling is ordinarily accuſtomed to haue, and could readily (*a*) find out and know my Maſſe by the great Letter at the beginning of it; and more then that, I could ſing *Aue regina*, & *Salue ſancta parens*, which is learning enough in conſcience for any Abbey-lubber, vnleſſe hee bee too vnreaſonable. So that now there wanted nothing to my taking of Orders, ſaue onely that my minority and want of yeeres hindred it; wherefore in the meane time I continued in writing ouer diuers books for them, and amongſt the reſt, the Regiſter of their Houſe, wherby I came to ſome vnderſtanding of their eſtate, beginning and ſucceſſe vntill this preſent, which for the ſatisfaction of the Reader, I thought good to ſet downe as briefly as I could, before I proceed any farther, or ſpeake of their manners and conuerſation.

[a] *There are not a few Friers and Priests that haue no other meanes to finde their Maſſe; and when they haue found it, (if you would hang them) they are not able to conſtrue two lines of it.*

Firſt therfore for the Houſe. The Nuns thereof doe challenge (and indeed truly) a ſucceſſion frõ the Abbey of *Sion* in *England*, now belonging to the Earle of *Northumberland*, (*b*) which houſe together with another Monaſterie of *Carthuſian* Monkes, called *Shyne*, being both ſcituated vpon the *Thames*, were erected and built by King *Henry* the 5. at his returne from his famous Conqueſt in *France*. In which two houſes he eſtabliſhed an Order, that to the end of the world there ſhould bee an alternate courſe of Praier; ſo that when the one had

[b] *See* Stowes Chronicle at large.

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had finiſhed their deuotions, the other ſhould inſtantly beginne. And being thus founded, that of *Shyne* was peopled with *Carthuſian* Monkes, & the other with Nuns and Friers of S. *Bridgets* Order.

But when it pleaſed the Lord of his infinit mercy to diſperſe and ſcatter thoſe thick clouds of ignorance and ſuperſtition, which had a long time bedimmed the eyes, and darkned the vnderſtanding of our forefathers, and that the glorious light of the Goſpell began to be more and more reſplendent in the latter end of the reigne of King *Henry* the 8. then as well theſe Houſes, as all other of the like ſuperſtition were ſubuerted, & aboliſhed, and the people of them either diſmiſſed & ſent home to their friends, or elſe continuing more obſtinatly in their blind zeale, exiled; ſaue only ſome few who for withſtanding the Kings Supremacy, receiued the reward of Traitors. Among which Father *Raynolds* the Confeſſor of theſe Nunnes was executed. In memory of whom they haue painted his Picture & maner of execution vpon their Church walles, eſteeming him as a holy Martyr amongſt them, as good as either (c) S. *Campian*, or *Beatus Pater Henricus Garnet*, although that amongſt the Ieſuites theſe are little leſſe then Saints.

After the death of this their ghoſtly father, both they & the *Carthuſians* of *Shyne* tranſlated themſelues, and diuers of their (d) Reliques and trinkets beyond the Seas into *Flanders*. And the ſucceſſors of theſe baniſhed runnagates, are now the onely ſtumpe which remaineth of that huge tree, that whilome ouerſpred and ſhaddowed our whole

c *Although that* Campian, Garnet, *and ſuch other of the Ieſuites as dyed for Treaſon, are no canonized Saints; yet are they beatified by the Pope, which is the higheſt ſtep to canonization: and euery one of them is painted vp in the Ieſuites Churches with the Title of* Beatus Pater.

d *If they carried no reliques with them, it maketh not much matter, for little worth is that ſcull or dead mans bone, which will not by becomming a holy Relique, adde ſomething to the Popes Exchequer.*

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Country: which the Papiſts (in regard theſe two houſes had both one foundation, and were as it werelinked and tied the one to the other) do hold as miraculous, and doe take it as a ſure ſigne and token of their future returne from baniſhment; (e) nay ſome of the holieſt of our vnholy Siſters, haue not doubted (I thinke in imitation of the old *Sybils*) to propheſie of another golden age, when they ſhall againe be inſtaled in *Syon*: but

Admiranda canunt, ſed non credenda Sorores.

I know my Siſters at *Lisbon* for falſe prophets in more things then one. In the meane time they of *Shyne* remaine at *Macklyn* in the Low-Countries; and the Nunnes of *Syon*, after many tranſmigrations from *Sierick-zee* to their brethren at *Macklyn*, and from thence to *Roan*, doe now reſide at *Liſbon*. And this ſhall ſuffice for the foundation of the houſe, and the ſucceſſe thereof till this preſent. And now (by the way) it ſhal not be likewiſe much amiſſe for the ſatisfaction of ſuch as haue not bin acquainted with Friers buſineſſe, in a word or two to declare the originall of both theſe Orders, and from what Patrons they firſt deſcended. For in the Catholique *Romane* Church, amongſt all the diſordered Orders of ſwarming Locuſts, which are almoſt innumerable, there is none but take their beginning from one ſuppoſed Saint or other: and as the reſt ſo theſe.

For the *Carthuſians* ſprung vp from (a) one *Bruno* in the Kingdome of *France*, who is ſaid to haue beene preſent at the Funerall of a certaine Prieſt, reputed for a holy man in his life: but when they were

• *The Regiſter booke of their houſe, telleth of many of theſe propheſies, which were ſpoken by ſundry of the Siſters vpon their death-bed.*

a *Reade* Surius *vpon the life of* Bruno.

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were executing the office of the dead for him, (according to the vse of the Papists) it seemed they had beene deceiued in their imagination. For when the Deacon was come to the Lesson which beginneth *Responde mihi quantas habeo iniquitates, &c.* the dead man suddenly start vp, and said, *Vocatus sum*, or *accusatus sum*, chuse you whether; wherenpon they deferred his Obsequies vntill the nexy day, being all amazed at what had hapned; when proceeding the second time, and comming to the same words againe, the dead body made answer, *Iudicatus sum*. Then the third time they began their Seruice, and at the same *Responde* he sate vp and said, *Condemnatus sum*: wherewith this *Bruno* being stricken into an extreme feare, and much troubled, to thinke, that a man so generally reputed for holy, should yet be damned; determined to lead a most austere and solitary life: and to that end, being accompanied with a few others, whō he had made priuie to his purpose, he departed to a desart stupendious mountaine called *Carthusia*, where he liued (as they say) in great regularity, and from the name of that hill they came to be called *Carthusians*; and to this day they pretend more seuerity and strictnes of discipline then any other order of Monks or Friers whatsoeuer. Howbeit they remained not long in such solitary and vnfrequented places, but by little and little obtained their houses in euery great Citie & Towne, as magnificent, yea and more sumptuous then their fellow-Locusts; witnesse the *Charter-house* in *London*, which was once a *Cage of these vncleane birds.*

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Now for the other houſe of *Syon*: the Nunnes thereof take their beginning from their holy Mothers(*a*) Saint *Briget*, and her daughter Saint *Katherine*. This Saint *Briget* was of the blood Royall of *Suetia*; a woman(queſtionleſſe) of a good vnderſtanding and ſingular memory, howbeit miſerably ſeduced and led away by the ſubtil allurements of her ghoſtly Father, by whoſe perſwaſions and counſell ſhe went to *Rome* as a Pilgrime; and comming before the Pope, ſhe pretended to haue diuers reuelations from God; amongſt which, one was for the founding of this Order of Nunnes, which was indeed the chiefe marke, that both her ghoſtly Father and ſhe aymed at. The reſt of her pretended inſpirations were for the reforming of ſundry abuſes in the Church. Yea, ſhe ſpared not to tell the Popes holineſſe of many faults in himſelfe: but he (like a good blood-hound) quickely ſcented her, & followed her footing, till he plainly perceiued from whom ſhe was ſent: who (being a fellow that might vpon diſtaſte proue a Schiſmaticke, and make ſome reuolt in thoſe remote Countries from the Roman Church) he thought beſt to be winked at; & thereupon condiſcended vnto her requeſt, touching the erecting of a houſe of this Order, and ſo diſmiſſed her. But ſhe liued not long after, (whether his Holineſſe had procured ſome *medicum* to be miniſtred vnto her, or no, it is doubtfull) yet in her daughters daies the buſineſſe came to perfection: and the firſt Houſe of this Order was at a place called *Watſteen* in *Swethland*, from whence certaine Nunnes were procured

(*a*) Reade the reuelation of Saint Briget.

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red into *England*, to propagate their Rules and Ceremonies in *Sion* house, when it was first built.

The magnificence of this Couent in former times hath beene by the report of the now-liuing Nunnes very admirable: at this present it is not of any extraordinary repute; neither are the people of it for birth and parentage equall to their predeceſſors, who were wont to be of good deſcent: whereas now (ſaue only a few) they are Recuſants daughters of the meaner ſort, & ſilly tender-hearted chambermaids, who haue had the cuſtody of ſuch Seminaries and Ieſuites, as reſorted to their Maſters houſes in *England*, at ſuch times as they haue beene mewed vp for feare of *Croſſe* and his (*a*) Dog, and durſt not aduenture abroad in any of their ruffling diſguiſes, to ſeeke out for more change of paſture; (like father *Strange* the Ieſuite) where, making a vertue (or rather a vice) of neceſſity, the ghoſtly children haue miniſtred to their ſpirituall fathers in all things: and by ſuch means hauing gotten a clap, diuers of them (*b*) become Nunnes: and with a rabble of ſuch like ſtuffe, is this houſe of *Syon* much repleniſhed, there being of them in all betweene 40 and 50, whereof only fiue are ſtrangers, and the reſt all *Engliſh*. The names of ſo many of them as I can at preſent remember, I haue at the end of the booke ſet down, for the ſatisfaction of ſuch as deſire to know them.

There are likewiſe three Friers, the Confeſſor and two more; and a ſimple beſotted fellow, who hath the title of a familiar: and well may they call him ſo; for he will be drunke familiarly foure or

[a] *A perillous Curre to ſmell out a Ieſuite, or a Seminary, though they had bin neuer ſo cloſely cooped vp.*

[b] *It is no great miracle for a whore to become a Nunne; nor for a Nunne to become a whore.*

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or fiue times euery weeke; by reaſon whereof he is not apparelled in any religious habit, but goeth like an ordinary ſecular man, to the end the Houſe ſhould be the leſſe ſcandalized by him: for now ſo many doe not take notice of his drunkenneſſe as would, if they ſhould ſee him in a religious habit.

And this is the whole company of the Houſe at this time: but now if any man demand, how and by what meanes they are brought thither; and by whom they are maintained: let him know, that there lurketh in *England* an arch-Traitour, one (*a*) *Henry Flood* a Ieſuit, who is chiefe Agent for the tranſporting of Nunnes, both to (*b*) *Bruxels*, *Gruneling*, *Lisbon*, or any other place; and whither he pleaſeth to ſend them, thither they muſt goe. If they haue no portion, and perhaps ſome little honeſty, they are not for the Ieſuites tooth, *Aquila non capit Muſcas*, they muſt packe to *Gruneling*, to the poore bare-footed *Clares*. If they haue a ſmall portion, that likes not the Ieſuit neither: a pound of butter is nothing amongſt a crue of hungry Hounds; *nec vacat exiguis rebus adeſſe Ioui*: then away they trudge to *Lisbon*, where they are allow'd daily fiue crownes, and their bread, and many a good almes beſide is often beſtowed vpon them. But if they haue a good round ſumme for their dowrie, *ab Inferno nulla eſt redemptio*, there is no plucking them out of the Ieſuites iawes; they are ſtamped for *Bruxels*, and thither muſt they goe; where *Fitz herbert* & his fellow-Ieſuits wil quickly diſpoſſeſſe them of all worldly cares and vanities, and (like ſubtill Alchymiſts) refine them out of

[a] *This* Flood *cauſed the Ieſuites at* Lisbon *to ſpend a great deale of money on Powder, on a Feſtiuall day, a little before the* Powder-treaſon *in England ſhould haue beene effected, thereby to make experience of the force thereof. And alſo perſwaded one* Iohn How, (*a Merchant whom he had peruerted*) *and diuers other Catholikes, to goe ouer into England, and to expect their redemption there,* (*as he called it*) *awhile.*

[b] *In all theſe places there are Engliſh Nunneries, but none that haue continued euer ſince the ſuppreſſion of Abbeys in England, ſaue onely that at Lisbon.*

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of their filuer and golden droſſe, into a more ſublime eſtate and condition, and will cheriſh and nouriſh them, euen in their own boſomes: ſuch a burning zeale haue they towards them.

And this is the manner after which our Recuſants daughters in *England* are tranſlated into other Countries, to take vpon them the profeſſion of a ſolitary life, and to liue in pouerty, chaſtitie, and obedience; which how well they performe, I ſhall now (God willing) in part declare.

Firſt therefore for their pouerty, I meane of the Nuns of *Syon*, and they profeſſe themſelues the pooreſt of any Engliſh, except them of Saint *Clares* Order. It is well knowne, that they haue ten thouſand pounds at vſe in the Town-houſe of *Antwerpe*; a great part whereof hath beene giuen them by ſundry deceaſed Gentlemen in *Flanders* and *Portugal*; & beſide their yeerly penſion. Likewiſe when they remained in *France*, they had the cuſtody of no ſmall ſumme of money, which was ſent to them to keepe for Doctor *Lopez* the *Portugeſe*, as his reward for poyſoning our late Queene *Elizabeth* of famous memory, which after that Traitor (hauing miſſed of his intent) was executed, was remitted to them for an almes, as the Regiſter-booke of their houſe, (from whence I had it) ſhameth not to mention.

They haue likewiſe of late yeeres, through the politicke plodding of their Confeſſor, (a) giuen the Ieſuites noſes a wipe of two thouſand pounds, being the portion of the two daughters of Sr *A.B.* Viſcount M. whom a Nunne of the houſe (ſome-

(a) Sic figulus figulum, ſic & fabrum faber odit.

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times a Chambermaid of their fathers) had enticed from the Iesuites. For which, and some other like trickes about a Portugese Gentlewoman, the posterity of lame (*b*) *Ignatius* could almost find in their hearts to re-assume their Patrons first profession, & *vi & armis*, to take reuenge vpon that old hypocriticall Frier, which durst presume to be better studied in *Nic. Machiauil* then themselues: yea they so threatned him once, that he durst not goe abroad, lest they should worke him a mischiefe. Moreouer, they haue a daily pension of 5 crowns, and Wheat more then sufficeth to spend in the House. They haue Vineyards, Olive fields, corn-ground and houses, to the value of foure hundred (*c*) *mil-reis* by the yeere, which was the portion of the Portugese aforesaid, whom (being sole heire to her father, a man of great wealth) they perswaded to become a religious Sister in their Conuēt. What should I speake of the sale of their Masses, I meane the reuenues in generall of the *Sacrista* or Reuestrie? where, though there be but three Priests of them, and therefore but three Masses; and that neuer but vpon Festiuall dayes, for the Confessor himselfe will not say Masse vpon a worke-day, yet they will take mony of twenty men, and tell euery one they will say for him. Then haue they their boxes sent forth in the *Indian* and *Brasilian* ships, with S. *Briget's* image vpon them; to which, in a storm the poore blinded people will contribute liberally; & Sea-men that goe on such long voiages will take vp a moneths pay or two aforehand, and giue it for Masses to be said for their good successe.

(*b*) Ignatius Loiola, *a lame souldier, a Spaniard, the glorious Patron of the Popes Ianizaries, the Iesuits.*

(*c*) *Euery mil-reis is twelue shillings and sixe pence.*

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ceſſe. I haue knowne this in on yeere worth ſixe hundred *mil-reis* vnto them. Diuers other meanes they haue to get money: as by putting a good ſumme into the hands of a couple of young Merchants, whom they haue peruerted to their Religion: and theſe men deale for them vnder a colour. So that I may boldly ſay, (for I haue heard *Foſter* himſelfe ſpeake it, and I haue partly ſeene it) that all charges and expenſes of the Houſe being payed, they doe yeerely lay vp (a) ſixe hundred pounds. For the ſiluer that inſhrineth their Reliques, & for their Church-plate, I know not how to value it; but it is without doubt both plentifull and maſſie; for there bee few of their rotten Reliques but are ſet in ſiluer. They haue two armes of *Thomas* of *Canterbury*, notwithſtanding all his bones were burned in *England*, when Popery was ſuppreſt; ſo that they will make of him a *Briareus*, or a *centimanus Gygas*, as doubtleſſe he was in his life, a very obſtinate Prelate to his Prince. And for Saint *Vrſula*, ſhe muſt needes be a *diua triformis*, or a *triceps Hecate*; for they haue one of her heads; and there is another of them at *Collen*, and the third at *Rome*. Then haue they the bones of S. *Briget* and her daughter, and ſundry Reliques of Saint *Auguſtine*, from whoſe rule theirs is deriued. There is (a) the milke of our Lady, the blood of *Hales*, which was held ſo precious in *England*; and (ſir reuerence) there is a piece of old (b) *Tyborne*, which the Ieſuites ſtole away out of *England*, becauſe it had beene honoured by ſo many of their brethren, which is had in little leſſe eſteeme then

(a) *And it is no ſmall ſumme of money that he ſendeth to his kindred in Yorkſhire that are Papiſts: but he will acknowledge none of them that are Proteſtants.*

(a) *Beleeue it that liſt.*

(b) *Although they cannot abide the Ieſuits, yet they loue their Gallowes, becauſe thereby they get money.*

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the holy Croſſe: for (ſay they) as the Maſter died on that, ſo his Diſciples dyed vpon this. And theſe are all ſet in ſiluer, and richly adorned. Then haue they a little childs legge, which I think they may truly call as they doe; for they ſay it is a legge of the *Innocents*, and doubtleſſe ſo it is, for I could (if I were in the houſe) goe very neere (*c*) a place in a Wall, where I could fetch out both legges and armes of poore innocent baſtards, which might euidently proue, that there is knauery in dawbing.

(*c*) Saxa ipſa trabeſque loquentur.

And hauing hereby giuen a ſufficient inſtance of their pouerty, I will now proceed to ſpeak a little of their chaſtity, which is as ſcarce and penurious, as their pouerty is plenteous. Neither can it be otherwiſe; for they haue *Sodoms* prouocations to ſinne, Pride, Fulneſſe of bread, and abundance of Idleneſſe. As for their pride, though it be not outwardly in gorgeous and curious attire, yet are they poſſeſſed with a vain-glorious pride of hypocriſie, and diſſembled ſanctity. For their fulneſſe of bread, who knoweth not that they (like the Caterpillers of *Egypt*) doe eate vp the fat and beſt fruits of the Land? for what the purueyors of the *Vice-rey* haue forſaken in the market (as too deare) I haue knowne the Caror of this houſe to buy at vnreaſonable rates for their ghoſtly fathers table, and for ſuch of his Chickens as he moſt affected: whoſe greateſt (and indeed only) care is, to proue skilfull in the confection & dreſſing of ſuch dainty Cates as may beſt pleaſe their wanton palates. And well do they manifeſt the abundance of idleneſſe that is in them, when at ſundry times playing vpon

vpon their Instruments for their fathers recreation, they sing him ribaldrous songs and jiggs, as that of *Bonny Nell*, and such other obscene and scurrilous Ballads, as would make a chaste eare to glow at the hearing of them, and which I would scarce haue beleeued would haue proceeded out of their mouthes, had I not heard them with my owne eares.

And now againe for the House: Whereas all other Religious Houses are vnder the Iurisdiction *of* Prouincials of their own Order *mediatè*, and vnder the Bishop of the Dioceſſe *immediatè*, yet this is not subiected to either: For as for a Prouinciall they haue none, in regard there are no more Houses of that Order; neither would the Arch-bishop of *Lisbon* take them into his iurisdiction at their first cōming into *Portugall*, fearing left that being strangers, and at that time pretending want and pouerty, he should afterward be driuen to sustaine and relieue them; they being forbidden to begge by their rule: and so he put them off with a *non nobis vos*, telling them he neuer knew nor heard that (*a*) *frayles y freiras* Friers and Nuns should keepe & dwel together al *sub eodem tecto*, vnder the same roofe. Whereupon they were constrained to entertaine that famous Arch-Iesuite Father *Parsons* to be their sollicitor to the Pope, who then tooke them into his protection, & appointed his *Nuncio apostatico*, resident in *Lisbon*, to haue the care and charge of them: and he againe being bribed and presented with gifts by Father *Foster*, & dwelling farre from the house, is satisfied with what he telleth

(a) *At their first comming into* Lisbon, *they were little set by, and euery one maruelled at their Order, and liuing so together. But now their dissembling hath wonne them a little more credit.*

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leth him, and neuer commeth to viſit the Nuns, as he ought, and to enquire & demand their grieuances; but permitteth him to play *rex* ouer them at his own pleaſure. Whereupon it is pittifull and miſerable to behold the conditiõ of theſe ſilly ſeduced women: for they neither dare nor can complaine to any body, being ſeldome permitted to ſpeak euen to them that are of the houſe as well as themſelues, but only at ſuch times when the Abbeſſe is preſent: except it be ſhe that keepeth the Grate, and ſome others that are in office amongſt them; and theſe are all the yonger and more perſonable Women, being by this *Foſters* politique contriuing ſo placed of purpoſe, that by and with thẽ he may the more freely enioy the ſcope of his laſciuious and ſacrilegious deſire. And theſe women having predominance ouer the others whom want of beauty and fauour hath made deſpicable in the eyes of this old *Sinon*, doe (according to the paſſionatenceſſe of their mindes) more and more vex their poore fellow-priſoners. For it is the ſubtilty of this perfidious wretch, to ſet them at variance among themſelues, and to cauſe them to accuſe one another, to th'intent they ſhould not dare to truſt one another with the complaint of their griefes; and ſo whilſt they remaine in a iealouſie of each others ſecrecy and aide, they ſhould neuer be able to contriue any meanes to free themſelues from this thraldome.

At this ſtay doth he keep them: and not ſo content, he will make them to Article one againſt the other in writing. It was my chance one day to find

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a paper of these Articles in a walke in the Friers Garden, which had vnawares falne from him; being drawne by one Sister *Anne*, alias *Iosepha Bingham*, against Sister *Susan Bacon*: Wherein the said Sister (b) *Susan* stood accused, for blaming her ghostly Father, and the Abbesse and Prioresse of partiality to some of their children more then to others. Also that she had vpbraided this sister *Iosepha* (being a deare darling of Father *Fosters*) of too much familiarity with Father *Garnet* the Powder Traitor, (c) whose carefull keeper shee had of a long time been, when he lurked in *England* at her Mrs house. Also that another of her ghostly Fathers minions had a bastard by a Priest in *England* (whose name becausse she is lately dead, I wil passe ouer in silence) and that if shee had beene a little more honest, & a little lesse personable, she should not haue been one of the vpper Regiment. With this and a great deale more of such like stuffe was this paper fatsed; and with these and the like accusations one of another are these silly women daily busied. So that I haue generally obserued in the superiours of this house an egregious neglect and contempt of their rule and vowed profession: and in the rest an extraordinary maligning and enuying against one another. And so much the better could I obserue this and all other my narrations, by how much I grew to be a more neere & daily attēdant about the Confesser; for at length, what with my long continuance in the house, and the small suspect they had of my forsaking them, and what for want of one to serue him at al occasions, I became

b *If these silly oppressed women were examined by men of authority, and were assured to be free from such a tyranous Confessor, they would tell of horrible abuses.*

c *This Sister Iosepha is a stout defender of the miracle in the Wheat straw, which hapned as was said at Garnets execution, although it be now proued a very counterfet, and a false lye.*

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became to be oftentimes admitted euen into his priuate house of iniquity, where he vseth to sit & heare the confessions of the Nunnes. In which house being very dark, there is a grate of iron that looketh into the Nuns partition or side; and this grate, (howsoeuer it seeme substantiall and firme) may be, & is with a sleight easily taken out, wherby the sisters haue free egresse & regresse into his chamber when they list, and he to them: for the Abbesse hath her bed not farre from his Grate, where there is also a chimny so cõuenient that he may take the benefit of the fire into his roome, in which he vseth to dine and sup, hauing his meat serued him by the Nunne, thorow a Wicket in the wall: and when he is merrily disposed, (as that is not seldom) then must his darling *Kate Knightly* play him a merry fit, & sister *Mary Brooke*, or some other of his late-come Wags must sing him one bawdy song or other to digest his meat. Thẽ after supper it is vsuall for him to reade a little of *Venus and Adonis*, the Iests of *George Peele*, or some such scurrilous Book: for there are few idle Pamphlets printed in *Englãd* which he hath not in the house, being either brought ouer to his sonne *Peter*, the drunken Familiar aforesaid, by Sea-men: or else happening into the hands of Father *Newman* an *English* Priest, who hath an office in the Inquisitiõ house to peruse all *English* books that are brought into *Lisbon*. And he, I trust, shall haue the sight of this, wherein if he vse a good conscience, hee must needs testifie with mee the truth of many things herein contained; for he is one that knows more

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more of these people then any but themselues, or some that haue liued amongst them.

If I should repeate all their vnchast practises, I should make the Christian Reader blush at them: or if I should tell of all the obscene bawdry which I haue seene, I might recount as many irreligious prankes as would fill a great Volume: but it shall suffice for the skilfull by the length of their foot, to iudge of the proportion of their whole body.

And now for their Obedience, being the third and last part of their Vow; I will not go about to vse any Theologicall definitions or proofes, to tell what Obedience is, and how it ought to be performed; for it is beyond my element, and the Coblers checke shall be my warning, I will not goe *vltra crepidam*: but as I first determined, so I will proceed; that is, to declare in what sort they performe their vow of obedience; refering it to the censure of the iudicious, whether they doe well or no.

It is certain that these silly women thus muzzled in blindnesse, do liue in very seruile obedience vnto their Superiours, and in such sort, that without standing to discusse or examine the thing that is cōmanded them, whether it be lawfull or no, they will readily performe it. For their ghostly father hath composed sundry Treatises for them of Obedience, wherein hee pronounceth no lesse then damnation for the least scruple or hesitation in the performance of their superiours commands. And here let me tell the aforesaid (*d*) Father *Newman*, what a tricke his old friend *Foster* hath put vpon him,

(d) *It behoueth father* Newman *for his own credit to looke to this. The like also hath he done with certaine meditations vpon the Passion, which he requested father* Iohn Kensington, *an English Iesuite at* S^t Rocks *in* Lisbon *to peruse and approue: being gelded likewise as the other Bookes of Obedience were.*

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him, which is this: Hauing made these bookes of Obedience, he caused me to write them out faire, omitting in many places a leafe, and in some two or three together, which contained any false doctrine, and vnallowable perswasions to draw them to obedience in vnlawfull things, and being finished in this sort, he brings them to Father *Newman* to be signed with his approbation and testimony, that there was nothing in them repugnant to the Catholique faith; which being done, hee then interferteth and soweth in the aforesaid omitted leaues, and so deliuereth them to his daughters to be practised, who take the approbation at the end of the book for a sufficient warrantie of all the doctrine therein contained. And this is a principall furtherance to his sacrilegious lusts: for I am verily perswaded that not one amongst them will (for feare of being disobedient) refuse to come to his bed whensoeuer he commands them: & that they doe so, I haue manifestly seene and knowne. For when I haue bin his Chamberlaine in the absence & times of drunkennesse of the familiar aforesaid, hauing a Key to the Chamber doore, (*e*) I haue come sometimes vnawares early in a morning, when one might haue seene as great a miracle as *Scoggin* spake of when he took a Frier a bed with a Whore, & called one to see a wonder, *viz.* a Frier with foure legges. And now I will a little digresse to aske a question of my *Ignatius*, who are the chiefe teachers and allowers of equiuocation and mentall euasion; whether these kind-hearted soules, being professed Nuns, and hauing vowed

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neuer to come ouer the threshold, did breake their vow or no, in comming thorow a grate? If they say they did: why, their ghostly father will dispence with their vow: but if they say they did not; (as I thinke they will) what then? Marry I think that when their blacke Synagogues at *Rome Valladolid* and *Siuill* doe send forth their locusts into *England*, and they chance to bait by the way at *Lisbon*, as they doe oftentimes, they deserue to enter commons with old father *Serb* for their legitimation of the action. And to the end that no man should doubt, but a Iesuit hath a carnall affection, as well as a spirituall, to any of his ghostly children, it shall not be amisse to interlett a merry Tale for the Readers recreation, of one father *Strange* an English Iesuite, as it was reported for table talke by a Nun of this house to her ghostly Father; she hauing then beene a chamber-maid in the place where it was done.

This Father *Strange* was a yong man, and had been lately before profest and priested among the Iesuits: and being come of good friends, and tenderly broght vp in *England*, he fell very sick shortly after his profession, perhaps by reason of the vnwholsomnesse of the ayre, which neither at *Rome* nor *Valladolid* is very pleasant: whereupon he obtained licence of the *Rector* to goe into *England*, where he hoped both to recouer his health, and to imploy his talent of Priesthood, for the reducing of Hereticks to the Catholike Church of *Rome*. And being arriued, he tooke vp this Nuns Ladies Chamber for one of his places of *rendezvous*:

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where it so fell out, that as this sister *Anne* (for that is her name) sate sowing with her backe to her Ladies backe, and the Iesuits, who were sitting by the fire, she chanced to looke vpon a great Looking-glasse which hung right before her, wherein she espyed what paines the late sicke Iesuite tooke to shriue her Lady: neither had he ended his shrift, before he also espied her looking in the Glasse; & suspecting that she had seene all, (as indeed shee had) (g) he tooke her aside in priuate, and told her that he was flesh and blood, and could abstaine no more then another man, although at his profession he had vowed chastity: & vsing many perswasions to win her to be secret, he promised her, that if she stood in need of a ghostly father to absolue her from any of her sweet sins, (as he called these) he would be the man should doe it; neither should her penance be ouer-burthensome vnto her.

(g) *She might haue knowne by this, what she should trust to when she was a Nunne: but it seemes she was as good as her Mistresse: and I am sure that her Father* Foster *is as good as the* Iesuite.

By which may appeare both the carnall affection of a Iesuit, and the chast and sober conuersation of a profest Nunne and her ghostly father: of the Iesuit in doing it; of her, in not shaming to tell it as a tale for recreation; and of the old fornicator, in making himselfe merry at the hearing of it; yea, and reporting it againe in his iolly humour, to my selfe, and one father *Vivian* a Frier of the house, among a great sort of such like inuectiues which he vsed against the Iesuits, because, a little before I came away, they went about (if it had beene possible) to extrude the succession of any more Friers in the House, and to bring it vnder their gouernement; which I beleeue they will ere long effect.

For

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For I was told by an English Iesuite at the Court of *Spaine*, that father *Foster* is bound vnto the Iesuites, neuer to ordain any more Friers in the house, that so for want of successors it may of force fall into their hands; and vpon this condition the Iesuites permit him to liue quietly; which, if hee should not obserue, they would quickly informe against him of sundry of his prankes, which they know well inough. And if it be so (as like it is) the Nunnes haue no knowledge thereof, for hee feedeth them with hope of making new brothers, which they seeme earnestly to wish for: (a) and they would often tell me, they hoped ere long to see me a profest brother of the *Couent*: but it pleased God to dispose better for me, & not to suffer me to be any longer lulled in sinne and superstition: for after I had beene two yeeres and an halfe with them, I found a meanes to free my selfe from them, before I had made any profession or vow of religion, either to that or any other Order: for I plainely saw, that these were led by a wrong guide who was so deepe plunged, and had continued so long in all wickednesse and dissembling, that hee was growne insensible of sinne; according to that saying, *Consuetudo peccandi, tollit sensus peccati.* For he shamed not, vnder pretext of religion, to perswade a yong man, a Merchant in *Lisbon*, (one *How* doe you call him) to defraud his (b) owne elder brother of his estate; which matter was thus effected.

(a) *The Nunnes thought surely it should be so, and if he did not meane so, yet I was loth to trust to it, in regard of his daily earnestnesse with me concerning that matter.*

These two brethren were by profession Iewelers, and aduentured their stocke ioyntly together:

(b) *These two brethren are both liuing in Lisbon at this present, and well knowne to most Englishmen that vse Portugall.*

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the yonger brother (for that he was a Batchelor) being Factor for it beyond the ſeas. At length hauing made many good returnes, hee tooke vp his abode in *Lisbon*, as a place moſt conuenient for his Trade; and falling into familiarity with this father *Foſter*, and father *Flood* a Ieſuit, who then liued in *Lisbon*, they perſwaded him to become a Romane Catholike, and ſo ſoone as he could get his brothers ſtock againe into his hands, to profeſſe himſelfe ſuch; which he accordingly did: and ſo (being inſtructed by them, that it was meritorious to coozen an Hereticke, as they account all Proteſtants) defrauded his brother, and would come to no accompts with him, relying vpon the ſupportation of theſe Hypocrites, on whom he beſtowed liberal Almes; giuing them many faire pictures for their Church, and a Horſe of 20. *mil-reis* price, to fetch home their prouiſions to the Houſe, beſides diuers other things: whilſt in the meane time his brother was vndone, and could get nothing at his hands by law, in regard he was a Proteſtant. Wherevpon he was faine to petition in *England* for redreſſe many times, & yet could not preuaile to recouer any thing: yea, he refuſed to come into his owne Countrey, or to obey the command of the Councell, in giuing ſatisfaction for what hee had in his hands. At length the Lord *Roſſe* comming Ambaſſador into *Spaine*, and ſtaying by the way at *Lisbon*, (where hee landed) decided the matter betwixt them; and articles of agreement were drawne by Father *Newman*, which my ſelfe afterward wrote out faire for them: the tenour where-

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whereof was this in effect: That either of the brothers should by a day prefixed, bring in a iust accompt of all debts due vnto thē, as likewise of all debts which either of them ought: also that they should bring in all such monies and goods as did any way as their own belong vnto them: and that they should both depose and sweare, that they had truly laid open their estates. And this being done, their debts which they ought, were to be paid out of the whole summe, and the debts which were owing to them, were to be added vnto it; and so they to share equally betwixt thē whatsoeuer remained, that by this means their estates might be both alike. Now a few dayes before this was to be put in effect, the younger brother knowing his estate to be farre better then the others, commeth very pensiuely to his ghostly father old *Foster* for counsell, who instructed him to come to the Abbesse, and some other of the Sisters at their grate, where they vse to talke with strangers, & there to tell thē that he was weary of the troubles & vexations which attended a Merchants life, and therfore he would renounce the world, and become a religious man: and seeing that God had bestowed sufficient wealth on him, he could doe no better, then to impart it to them, being such holy Saints as had prefer'd that kind of life in a strange country, before all worldly content in their own. And thereupon at his fained request, they sent their horse to his house, and had him laden backe with plate, iewels and mony, which my selfe helped to take from the Horse backe, and carry into *Fosters* Cell.

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Cell. He had likewise at that time a great quantity of *Cochenill* in sundry bagges, being at least foure-teene or fifteene hundred weight, amounting to no small summe of mony, which he had a little before bought of the *Indian* Fleet, who that yeere, and about that time put into *Lisbon*; and this was brought into the Nunnery by night out of the Shippes, to defraud the King of his right, and was vnder a colour, together with the other things, giuen to the Sisters of the House. By which dealing hee so imbezeled his estate, that when his Brother and hee came to an accompt, there remained little or nothing for him to receiue; being by this meanes defrauded of all he should haue had. When as presently after this conclusion was made betweene them, Father *Foster* and the Abbesse send for their ghostly child, giuing him thankes for the good will he had to bestow his estate vpon them: but they told him, (as was before determined) that so much mony and wealth was an hinderance to their deuotion; and therefore they requested him to haue it away againe: to which he soone condiscended; telling them, that now also his chiefest troubles were ouerpast, (meaning, because hee had done with his brother) and that he perceiued it was not Gods will to make him so happy, as (such another youth) Father *Nicholas Price*, who awhile before, of a Merchant, became a *Dominican* Frier: and therefore he would liue as aforetimes; and when he died, he would bequeath all hee had to the Church: and thereupon tooke home all his estate againe,

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againe, after he had by theſe æquiuocations and euaſions defrauded his brother.

And now leſt this Treatiſe ſhould riſe to an ouer-bigge Volume, I will haſten to an end, after I haue in a few words ſet downe the manner of my departure from them, which was thus:

After I had continued with them for the ſpace of two yeeres and a halfe, and had plainly perceiued, that all their outward ſhew of holineſſe was nothing but diſſimulation, hypocriſie, and luſtfull ſacriledge, I began to conſider in what a miſerable eſtate I ſhould be, if God ſhould at that time call me out of the world; for I could well ſay with the Poet, *Video meliora, proboque, deteriora ſequor:* I ſaw & allowed of the beſt way, yet followed the worſt: at length the feare of my ſoules health, and a naturall affection to my kindred and country ſo wrought with me, that I waxed reſolute in my determination of forſaking them: but not knowing how to effect my purpoſe without hazard of my life (for they would haue poyſoned me, if they had knowne I would haue gone from them, becauſe I ſhould not betray their ſecrets) it came in my mind to draw out certaine Articles in manner of an information againſt them, which I thought to exhibit to the chiefe Inquiſitors of the Citie. And this might haue beene very dangerous vnto me, if they ſhould not haue proceeded according to Equity; of which I was doubtful, fearing that (a) many great men of other Monaſteries (being perhaps in the ſame predicament) would haue ſtopped the courſe of Iuſtice, *propter honorem Monaſticæ vitæ,*

(a) *Reade* Muſgraue *his Motiues for forſaking the Carthuſian Monkes, and Romiſh Religion, after he had bin 20 yeeres profeſſed.*

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for the credit of a Monaſticall life, as is many times done: yet notwithſtāding I was reſolued to vndertake this courſe, and had prouided my Articles, which were theſe:

1. *That Father* Seth, *alias* Ioſeph Foſter, *the Confeſſor of the Engliſh Nunnes of Saint* Bridgets *Order in Lisbon, did compell diuers youths his countrimen, againſt their wils to remain with him in the houſe: who if they had any good affection to the Romiſh Catholike faith before they came there, were ſoone brought into diſlike of it, by reaſon of the ill gouernment which is vſed in the houſe.* And of this ſort I could haue inſtanced in twenty, who within a few yeeres haue beene recorded in their Regiſter booke, for Apoſtate run-awayes.

2. *He would daily without any companion goe into the Nunnes Cloiſter or Side, and remaine there halfe a day together, yea and ſometime ſit and dine at their Table with them, but euery day in their ſight, which is expreſly againſt their Rule.* And this I could haue proued by the teſtimony of diuers *Portugeſes* our neighbours, who frequenting the houſe, haue oftentimes obſerued and ſeene him going in, and comming forth, and haue ſpoken of it to my ſelfe and others. Alſo the Nunnes themſelues would haue auouched it vpon their examinations.

3. *He hath in his Cell, where he heareth their confeſſion, a Grate, which I can ſhew how he vſeth to take downe with a ſleight, thorow which the Nunnes paſſe to his bed by night.* And for the further auouching of this, I would haue brought in the drunken familiar aforeſaid, who will many times in his drinke, tell

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tell how he helped to make it firme, against a time when there was a visitatiõ intended by the Popes *Nuncio*, and expected by them of the House, although it was not performed.

4. *That in many yeeres past there never came any Visitor to the House, to examine and vnderstand their grieuances; neither haue they any Confessor extraordinary, as all other Religious haue, to whom they might freely complaine of their Superiours oppressions.* And this needed small proofe, for it would soone haue beene apparant enough of it selfe.

5. *Through his politique plotting, he causeth whom he list to be elected Abbesse* (for they hold their places but three yeeres) *and her to dispose of the house as he thinketh good.* This also the Nunnes themselues would quickly complaine of, if they had one to heare their complaint.

6. *That my selfe (being diuers times called into the Nunnes partition or side, to helpe them to naile vp boards, set vp their Vines in the walkes of their Garden, and doe such like things which women could not so wel do) did chance to make a hole in a hollow place in a wall, (which had bin latelier dawbed vp then the rest) to set vp a Spar to vnderprop the Vines; out of which hole I pul'd sundry bones of some dead children, and left many more remaining behind.* And this the place it selfe would testifie to be true.

Hauing thus prouided my Articles in a readinesse, I absented my selfe from helping the Priest at Masse that day, who being ready to go into the Church, and missing mee, was faine to take another Clerke, whilst I walked vp and downe my

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chãber, with a reſolute mind to depart the houſe. At length commeth Father *Foſter*, (for he vſed euery day to viſit me at vnawares, to ſee if he could finde me writing of any thing that diſliked him) and eſpied vpon my table (which I had negligently forgot) a blotted Copie of my Articles, being the firſt draught of them: which when I ſaw him take vp, I proffered to ſnatch out of his hand, but miſſed of my purpoſe; and thereupon went down the ſtaires, and ſo tooke my way out at the gates: but he (hauing ſoon perceiued to whom they were directed) followed me amaine, and quickly ouertook me, yea euen before I was paſt his own wals; and demanded of mee what I meant by ſuch doings; I told him my intent; & bade him peruſe the Articles at large, giuing him a faire copie of them out of my boſome, where I had 3. or 4. more.

But as ſoone as he had read them, he waxed pale as aſhes, & was ſo terrified, that he began earneſtly to intreat me, that I ſhould not proceed in my purpoſe, and told me, that if I would be ſecret, I ſhould haue his good will to depart; whereof being glad, I not onely promiſed, but performed ſecrecy, (although indeed I ought not to haue done it) not bewraying any of his prankes to my neereſt acquaintance and friends; vntill ſuch time as hauing occaſion a few moneths after to be at *Lisbon* againe, he ſuſpected me vniuſtly of telling tales of his houſe; and meeting me one day in the ſtreet, he called me to him, and told me, that if I did not priẽtly depart the City, he would haue my throat cut. Vpon which his deuilliſh ſpeech I could not refraine

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refram any longer, but in the opẽ ſtreet I told him of many of his vngodly actions which came to the hearing of diuers of our Nation, being men of good quality, whereof ſome haue teſtified in *England* to honourable Perſonages in my behalfe how ready and willing I was to auouch and maintaine whatſoeuer is herein contained, and much more: which (although it be here omitted) I am ready at all times truly to declare and ſet forth for the ſatisfaction of all that deſire it: but ſpecially for ſuch as haue either Daughters or Kinſwomen in that houſe, in whoſe behalf I am bound to intreat their friends to enter into a further ſearch of their miſerable eſtate and conditiõ; and (hauing found my words true) to vſe meanes, if it be poſſible, to free them from ſuch horrible and ſacrilegious rapine and ſpoile; themſelues not being able to ſend any word thereof, becauſe all their Letters muſt be giuen to him to be ſent into *England*; which if they cõtain any thing contrary to his mind, ſhal neuer be ſent: for he will peruſe them. And likewiſe when their friends ſend to them, the Letters muſt firſt come to his hands, wherein alſo if there be any thing that he miſlikes, (for he will breake them all vp) they ſhall neuer know of it. And here I will conclude, hoping that the friendly Chriſtian Reader wil be no way ſcandaliz'd with any thing herein contained. But as for the curious and captious, (eſpecially *Romaniſts*) if they tax me for any thing I haue written, let them know I haue done neither thẽ nor any of their ſect any wrong in publiſhing the truth. If any of them amongſt theſe inſuing

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names finde either a Sister or Kinswoman, or Friend, let him sigh to thinke on their misery, and vse his best indeuours to free them. I haue not set downe all their names, because I cannot well call them to remembrance; neither are many of these christen names the same which they had in *England*, it being vsuall at the Bishops confirmatiō to take what name they will: as also some of the sirnames are not their true names indeed; for the Papists do many times change their names: but there are few of these which are not right; and howsoeuer, they are knowne to their friends by these.

The Friers of the House.

Seth alias *Ioseph Foster*, Confessor.
Iohn Vivian, } two Priests.
Nicholas Barrowes, }
Peter Consul, a Familiar, that is, a Lay-Brother, but a drunken one, God knowes.

The Nunnes of the House.

Barbara Wiseman, Abbesse.
Anne Wiseman Prioresse.
Elizabeth Hart, Chantresse.
Anne Wharton, Treasuresse.
Anne alias *Ioseph Bingham*, Portresse.
Lucy Iohnson Notaresse.
Dorothy Fowler, Keeper of the Reliques & Church stuffe.
Bridget Browne, } Daughters of Sir *Anth. Browne*,
Lucy Browne, } Viscount *Montacute*.
Elizabeth Preston sometime Abbesse, but now in disgrace

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disgrace with old *Foster*.
Anne Martin.
Anne Markenfield.
Susan Bacon.
Sisly Arundell.
Margaret Smith, alias *Becket*, and her Sister.
Mandlyn Shelly, *Kathrine Dendy*, *Elizabeth Cole*, three of the Kitchin.
Martha.
Clara Dowman, indeed *Anne Foster*, the Confessors Kinswoman.
Kath. Knightly, *Mary Browne*, two merry singing Waggs.
Anne, a Chambermaid of Sir *Anth. Browne*.
Mary Barnes a welbeloued friend of *Fosters*.
Mary Dimmock, a discontented yong Nunne.
M. Blinkscp, falsely reported by Father *Foster* to be allyed to diuers of the Nobility.
Agatha.
Elianor and *Angela*, two Dutchwomen.
Briget Mandamba, *Maria Suarez*, *Maria Rodriguez*, three *Portugeses*.

FINIS.

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